

# **PROCESS SKILLS**

## **COMMONLY USED PROCESS SKILLS**

### **Action Contract**

This is a process requiring one to establish a clear, unambiguous goal statement (a target for improvement), to assess the current situation that makes the goal relevant and important (the “why bother?”), and then develop step-by-step details likely to bridge the gap between “what is” and “what ought be.” Such details usually include: 1) Who is expected to do what (action)?; 2) When (timeliness and due dates)?; 3) To what extent (degree or intensity of the action)?; and, 4) How (the specific methods and strategies).? This is an excellent way to hold ourselves and others accountable for outcomes!

### **Active listening**

The focus here is upon a special type of listening. It is an intense process of making certain that the focus is on really hearing and understanding what others are saying. In active listening, one uses paraphrasing, as well as probing and clarifying questions, to ensure that the message has been received accurately.

If the essence of the statement has not been heard as intended, the speaker will immediately correct this. It is not uncommon for the speaker and listener to gain new or expanded insights, as the dialogue causes each to think more precisely, more deeply, about the thoughts which are communicated.

Careless listening, or even not listening, is symptomatic of people who are preoccupied with their own thoughts, or those who are thinking ahead about what they are going to say next. This is why those who develop the skill of active listening are more effective communicators.

### **Agenda building**

This is the process of planning a structured agenda for meetings. The reason is to ensure that items and activities really belong. Many times meetings are held simply because they were scheduled; little thought has gone into the rationale for what or why. People resent having their time taken up with what they perceived to be trivial matters, or items which could have been accomplished in another manner.

Once the purpose of the meeting has been determined, other considerations might include: a barrier breaking activity (team building), the use of staff members to assist, or provide a short in service program, establishing the ending time for the meeting (observe it religiously!), a little celebration activity (refreshments, a drawing, an inexpensive gift for everyone, etc.), and the use of humor.

### **Altering**

This is a skill which seems deceptively simple, because it is commonly used to change, modify, or reconstruct something. Because it appears so simple, we often forget that many ideas or situations can be improved by a slight adjustment in the format of the model or application of the skill being taught. In many instances, if one is to adapt someone else's idea, true ownership of that idea can only be achieved by bending, twisting, reshaping it to fit one's personal style or a particular situation.

### **Asking for help**

This is the process of making the most effective use of the human resources available. It is easy for leaders to fall victim to the expectation that they have all the answers. Wise, experienced leaders recognize that asking for assistance is "working smarter, not harder."

Interviews with outstanding Hoosier educators, such as H. Dean Evans, Dale Graham, Bill McColly, and Gene Cloncs, revealed that each used this strategy to achieve outcomes they never could have attained by going it alone. None considered asking for help as a sign of weakness.

In asking others for help, one becomes vulnerable; but, it also makes one more "human" in the eyes of those who follow. People are generally happy to help; it makes them feel special. A wise person was quoted as having said: "I can only lead if others let me." Think about it!

### **Attending behaviors**

A group of skills which are used to establish and maintain rapport between and among individuals. These may include the use of active listening, eye contact, similar body posture (mirroring), parallel language forms (syntax), and matching voice intonations. When applied in concert, these actually become a process for creating a sense of harmony and affiliation within groups between individuals.

### **Audio-visual aids**

Most accomplished educators recognize the potential to improve learning by utilizing both auditory and visual aids. Sight and sound not only have the power to reinforce, but also tend to motivate and inspire learners at an emotional level. Walt Disney University does a tremendous job at effectively demonstrating how sensory perceptions can enrich the learning experience. While most of us lack the resources available to Disney, we should strive to create an atmosphere for learning through the use of multiple sensory experiences.

### **Audits/Assessments**

There are many forms of needs identification. Each serves a specific function and should be selected accordingly. For example, the use of a climate audit reveals information about the affective qualities of a school. It describes what people perceive regarding the values, traditions, rituals, as well as basic feeling, which characterizes relationships within the school/community. A North Central evaluation or Performance-Based Accreditation audit will yield data relative to programs, procedures, and objectives. Needs assessments also uncover what new training or information groups feel they need in order to get better at what they do.

Using these tools as a process for gathering data and clarifying expectations, developing action plans is an essential skill for effective administrators.

### **Balancing task and relationship**

This process is drawn from several sources, including Theory X and Y management styles, the Ohio State University's Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire, etc. It is a reminder that leadership is situational. Effective leaders are sensitive to the need to provide a balance in the amount of time and attention given to getting the job done, as well as the human needs for recognition and affiliation.

### **Becoming expert**

growth. As lifelong Everyone is unique and special in some way. Although this process has value for

everyone, it has special significance for professionals. Each has the potential to express his/her talents and creativity in many possible forms. The self-actualizing educator will focus on a topic of interest and make the effort to become an expert in that area.

Parenthetically, it may also reflect the professional's commitment to continuous professional learners, educators have a responsibility to model that value by seeking every opportunity to stretch and extend their level of skill and knowledge. As leaders, it would be both presumptuous and hypocritical to expect others to get better at what they do without being the role model for self-improvement!

### **Brainstorming**

This is one of the best known and most often used of the process skills described in this series. It perhaps is also one of the most abused. There are specific rules which should be observed when attempting to generate ideas using this method. In true brainstorming, participants are asked to list as many possible ideas, facts, etc., within specific time limits. During that time, the participants create as much information as possible, without any time taken to pass judgment, or evaluation. Too often, groups are less productive in the use of the process, because they get side-tracked by being critical of information as it is offered during the brainstorming period. It is essential to set the ground rules to avoid losing valuable possibilities, either because time is wasted in being judgmental at an inappropriate time, or because ideas are being stifled through unnecessary criticism.

### **Broken syntax**

This is the process of using intentional pauses in one's pattern of speech. In using this technique, one creates interest for the listener. Not only through changing inflection and intonation, but the listener begins to anticipate which word(s) will follow the pause.

Those speakers who will learn to use this strategy effectively will greatly enhance the potential of their communication skills.

### **Building a lesson**

Leaders such as Gary Phillips, Bernice McCarthy, Madeline Hunter, Susan Kovalik, and others have given us the capacity to design lessons which address a variety of learning styles. They have also challenged us to engage learners at the appropriate level through the use of powerful, relevant teaching strategies. Good lessons don't happen by accident! They are planned intentionally and systematically.

### **C-C ratio**

This is a process which helps people focus upon how criticism is given in proportion to the number of compliments. It has been estimated that the amount of critical feedback to one another in the home is as high as 13 (criticisms) to 1 (compliment). In the classroom it is 18 to 1; and, in the faculty lounge, it may be as high as 50 to 1. For those interested in using this process to change relationships, it is possible to create greater awareness in people by having them consciously and systemically practice a 2 to 1 ratio. One may not offer any criticism without first giving two sincere positive statements to the individual being addressed.

### **Celebration**

This is a fun process, due to the fact that it makes it possible for us to plan rewards for ourselves when we succeed. Too often educators fail to find adequate fulfillment in their work. By the very nature of the profession,

closure is difficult to identify. As soon as one group of students graduate, another takes its place. As soon as one unit is finished, we begin another. No sooner than one committee completes its task, another is formed. And, all too often, no one takes the time or makes the effort to recognize these accomplishments.

Educators need to answer these questions: If anyone improves, who notices? Who cares? And, how does improvement get recognized and celebrated? Self-reward and group reward should be valued and become an integral part of a school's culture and climate.

### **Challenge activity**

One way to encourage continuous growth at all levels of learning is through the use of challenge activities or individualized challenge contracts. A challenge experience is basically defined as one which represents a first-time experience, involves some level of risk, and/or extends one beyond previously-known limits. It will have, as one outcome, the potential for failure.

One of the powerful advantages of being skilled in the use of this process is that it allows the teacher/trainer to involve all participants in meaningful, significant activities, but at a level of challenge appropriate to the individual. It affords everyone the opportunity to be most active in the learning, from the most to the least competent.

### **Change agent**

Leaders are agents of change. They must know how change occurs, what they believe about the process themselves, and have strategies for leading others successfully through these periods of disruption and uncertainty.

To be an effective change agent, one must not be afraid of change, but rather see it as an opportunity for improvement. Change is going to occur; it is a constant force. Despite our desire to stop the clock at times, the clock does not stop and change results. Therefore, because change is inevitable, it may be best to embrace it as a welcome partner in bringing about growth.

Change agents are good at breaking old paradigms. They often are able to help people see the old and the familiar patterns in the new. They have to be good listeners and have patience. They understand that not everyone is going to respond in a positive way. They anticipate who will resist, why, and who they need to have with them to succeed. If we win, who stands to lose? What would it take to minimize opposition? Can we achieve a win/win outcome?

### **Changing mindsets**

There are many possible ways to involve people in the process of examining the need for change, as well as the dynamics of the change process itself. In his video, [Discovering the Future](#), Joel Barker, a futurist, talks about a malady, he calls "paradigm paralysis." He describes it as a disease which can be fatal in extreme circumstances. As an example, one who would fail to recognize AIDS as the basis for adopting "safe sex" as a lifestyle may well lose his/her life.

Suffering from acute tunnel vision may be a less severe form of the same disease Barker describes. However, its effects on the growth and progress of individuals and on schools can be nearly as devastating. As Dr. Gary Phillips, National School Improvement Project, reminds us, "Everyone is for progress, as long as it doesn't require change."

In another video, [You Are What You Were When](#), Dr. Morris Massey explains that values drive behavior, and our

values are fairly well locked in by age 12. Attitudes and opinions may change, but our true values are unlikely to change, unless as adults, we encounter what Massey calls a "significant emotional experience."

Changing mindsets is a process which, on one end of the continuum, can require the creation of significant emotional events for groups or individuals. On the other end, it may be as simple as bringing new information to the attention of those involved. Whichever the case, effective educators will have several specific strategies for change to serve them well.

### **Clarify expectations**

This is a process which is used by all who understand the significance of that old saying: "I know you think you understand what I said; but what you don't understand is that what I said is not what I meant!"

It is important to take the time to ensure that clear communication has taken place by having those involved restate what it is that they believe they are expected to do. Research coming from the widely used TESA program suggests that people generally perform at the level of expectation, as established by the leader.

### **Closure**

The ability to put a "wrap" on a seminar, meeting, or class is a skill too often overlooked. If it has been important to bring people together, it is important to ensure that everyone leave with a sense of what was accomplished. This is also true of individual conferences.

Teachers who don't make closure an integral part of their lesson design are usually guilty of trying to give the assignment for the following day as the students are going out the door. Leaders of meetings who haven't given adequate thought to closure may create unnecessary confusion, misunderstanding, or frustration for those who need a summary of what was discussed, why it was important, or what will happen as a result of the meeting.

There are several ways one might do this. One effective means is to simply have a volunteer provide a summary and others can react. Another method is to have people form into small groups and quickly reach consensus on one important outcome of the meeting and then share it with the whole group. If the group is small, and time permits, each person can be asked to reflect on the most important idea, or the best thing that happened in the meeting, and these can be shared with all. These are a few ways one can determine how well the goals of the meeting, seminar, or conference have been accomplished.

### **Clustering**

This process is often referred to as mind-mapping and brain writing. It is an extremely versatile form of brainstorming, usually beginning with a single word or concept, written and circled in the center of a page. From that point, lines are drawn, extending away from the circle like spokes of a wheel. At the end of each spoke is another word which relates to the one at the center. These words are generated in the same manner as brainstorming. The advantage is that these words can then be related to each other as well as the central theme. Also, words at the end of the spokes can be circled, forming new clusters and becoming subtopics. Clustering is powerful, due to its flexibility. It has the potential to generate a lot of ideas while, at the same time, providing the initial structure for organizing complex thoughts and concepts. It can be used for something as routine as building an agenda for a meeting or as complicated as developing a plan for a new program.

### **Coaching**

This process involves an experienced, knowledgeable person assisting one who is in need of a new perspective

or fresh point of view. Often, we make the mistake of using the terms coaching and mentoring synonymously. Mentoring, however, is a situation in which one person is more knowledgeable and more skilled than the other. In coaching, this may not be the situation. In many instances, competent individuals may receive and benefit from a coach who may not be as skilled.

For example, many athletes have achieved a level of play superior to the level their coach may have attained; however, athletes, like the rest of us, cannot always see themselves as others do. Therein lies the difference. Knowledgeable, competent coaches can provide another professional feedback which is designed to correct flaws undetectable to the performer. Also, through effective mentoring and observation, coaches can provide new information and ask questions which can assist the other in developing new insights and making judgments about one's own level of performance.

### **Collegiality**

This process involves collaborating with peers as true equals. It is done in the spirit of cooperation, reflecting the attitude that working together and sharing ownership in what is accomplished is more important than titles or determining who receives credit. Collegiality is that which results when people who are trusting, unselfish, and focused upon a cause greater than themselves come together to achieve that which neither could achieve alone.

Further, the process involves treating people as if they are indeed special. It involves taking a risk by being open with people and making oneself vulnerable by admitting that we may not have all the answers. It means that professionals are willing to sublimate personal needs, or gain, for the greater needs and gains of the group. In the end, we celebrate the outcomes as if they were our own.

### **Communication**

As was the case in several definitions, it would be predictable that most people would feel competent in the use of this skill. However, once again, the process may be deceptive. Albeit, professionals have probably mastered both oral and written communication at an acceptable level of proficiency. One can always ask the question: "Good as I am, what would it take to get even better?" Furthermore, there are less obvious forms of communication which have not received much attention. Active listening, neurolinguistic techniques, and non-traditional channels of communication provide additional opportunities for professionals to enrich and broaden their skills. By learning new forms, and by refining traditional ones, visionary leaders can enhance communications so that messages are sent which have a greater impact upon the receiver.

### **Community resources**

This can be used to accomplish outcomes for children and programs that otherwise may be unattainable. Once again, all of us probably think we know how to utilize community resources. Generally, this actually means we have had a guest speaker, a local business person, or some child's parent come into class and make a presentation about his/her career.

There are so many possibilities, it is impractical to list but a few as examples. Among the most powerful connections with the community is the use of parents as volunteers to assist in the daily routine operations at school. This can free teachers to give more time to teaching. Another is the identification of talented, qualified individuals who can serve older students as mentors in specific areas or provide internships over extended periods of time.

Partnerships with local businesses can be nurtured to provide mutually beneficial outcomes. Formalized programs, like Jr. Achievement and Partners in Education, are excellent examples which embody some of the best qualities of this process.

Thinking of the use of community resources as a process will enable the creative leaders to enrich the curriculum through extended opportunities which cannot be duplicated at school. Furthermore, it can be seen as having potential for building a more positive morale within the school/community through increased involvement and rewards that come with shared ownership.

### **Conceptualizing**

This is a process which ought to include the use of several other process skills designed to generate ideas, establish relationships between things which may appear unrelated, and provide structure for the implementation of action plans.

This process involves the integration of the creative and cognitive domains. Knowledge and experience must combine with imagination and intuition. Often, less mature leaders make the mistake of perceiving this to be strictly an intellectual process.

### **Conducting Effective Meetings**

Peter Drucker and others have provided useful frameworks for planning more effective, productive meetings. Bringing groups together to plan and generate solutions that no one individual could accomplish alone is an essential component of organizational communication and improvement. The basic process of organizing for productive meetings usually includes: 1) A clear, well-articulated purpose; 2) An agenda which defines who, what, and when; 3) A climate which respects the various styles and needs of individual members equally; 4) An established beginning and ending time allowing adequate time for action; 5) A physical set-up which addresses the comfort of all participants; and, 6) A roster of participants which includes all, yet only, those who should be there.

### **Conflict resolution**

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of leadership. Those who learn to blend their skills, knowledge, and personality into a single tool aimed at helping themselves and others gain win/win outcomes. The literature in this area reveals a general consensus on critical tools in addressing conflict. They include: 1) State the issue which is the source of the conflict. 2) Identify the needs and goals of all stakeholders. 3) Seek the common ground. 4) Keep the focus on issues, avoiding personal agenda. 5) Respect the views of those who differ with you. 6) Be willing to find compromise. Recognize, however, that conflict is a relative term. It is typically easier to resolve conflict among those who share a common culture and values. 7) Once a solution is identified, make it clear that this will be revisited within a prescribed period of time to determine how well things are going. New alternatives may be sought at that time.

### **Consensus**

This is a process often misunderstood and abused because some people want to liken it to voting. Reaching consensus is not taking a majority vote, nor does it mean achieving unanimous agreement. Consensus is reached by allowing adequate time for each individual to reflect on the options available, or issues at stake. This step is followed by providing ample time for small group reporting to the larger audience. The amount of time and number of repetitions of the sequence required to achieve consensus is dependent on the seriousness of the issues and the number of people involved.

Perhaps the true test of consensus is that, although not every person may agree 100 percent with the decision and why it was chosen as the best of the alternatives, each will support the final outcomes.



One simple, but powerful, way to anchor the individual ownership of each group member is to have each participant initial or sign the decision once it is written down in final form.

### **Constructive confrontation**

Thomas Gordon, Virginia Satir, Eric Berne, Cris Argyris, and others have provided some basic principles on the process of confronting others in a positive manner. When someone's behavior begins to impair the relationship, it is usually preferable to work through it rather than "gunny sacking," or hoping the issue will pass. The process of constructive confrontation involves: 1) keeping the focus on the other person's behavior. Avoid name calling and/or making judgments about motives; 2) identifying a strength, or need, in the other person; 3) explaining the "cost," or consequences of their undesirable behavior to you and/or others; 4) stating how you feel about the situation; 5) giving the other person time to react to your statement; 6) actively listening to how the other person responds. To demonstrate your understanding, attempt to paraphrase, or restate, the response for clarification. Avoid arguing or defending your feelings; 7) stating the desired behavior that you feel would resolve, or ease, the situation for you; 8) asking for the other person's help; and 9) actively listening and being prepared to repeat the process using different words. In this process, there are no formal penalties, or consequences, to invoke on the other person as this is about one peer working with another. You simply use personal power and persuasion to gain cooperation and change.

### **Cooperative exams**

This may be utilized as a form of cooperative learning. The use of this process is especially effective with adult learners, although it works about as well with any group. The basic idea is to involve people in reviewing and reinforcing their learning by causing them to be more active in the preparation of the test, as well as its administration.

Some users have had students submit questions individually to be considered as part of an exam. Others may ask groups of students to pool their individual questions; and, through discussion, the groups arrive at consensus on the best two or three questions from their group.

Finally, a format is established to permit all, or teams of students, to participate in the testing. Teachers must decide on a grading system that will accommodate individual achievement, as well as the group's achievement.

### **Cooperative groups**

In organizations throughout this country, people are discovering the potential to be realized by working cooperatively. Generally, groups can accomplish substantially more than a single individual, especially if the process of group dynamics is given proper attention. Cooperative groups have: 1) a clear purpose; 2) a common vision of the future; 3) respect for ideas; 4) trust among members of the group; 5) good communications among group members and to those outside the group; 6) a focus on intended outcomes; 7) a process for resolving conflict; 8) a shared workload based, as much as possible, on interests and personal strengths; 9) a method to monitor progress; 10) the ability to make "in-flight corrections" when necessary; and, 11) an ability to use humor to reduce tension and keep things in the proper perspective.

### **Creative insubordination**

This is a process to be used only in a situation that is worth risking a reprimand, or worse. A milder form of this might be labeled: "discretionary decision making." In either case, when one uses creative insubordination, almost by definition, it suggests that one is faced with a values conflict that is blocking progress toward a desired outcome. In choosing to subvert, or bypass, the regulations of the "system," leaders are making decisions based

upon personal values, not those of the "system."

Those who have led effectively in a bureaucracy will testify to the need to be creative in seeking ways to circumvent cumbersome rules, regulations, and procedures. Those who exercise "discretionary decisions" are not reckless in their choices, nor do they ever flaunt their skills.

## **Debriefing**

This process skill addresses the need for people to have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their experiences. We know from news accounts that whenever U.S. citizens, military, or government officials are involved in any kind of unusual situation, either foreign or domestic, they are called in for an official debriefing. This process suggests that it is important to get impressions and information from individuals before they become vague and distorted by time, other events, and discussions with other people.

The same concept can be used by leaders/teachers to help assure that new learning and new insights are quickly identified following a class or workshop setting. For example, after a presentation by an expert, it is a wise leader who will organize people to share and exchange ideas and opinions in small discussion groups. In this way, learning can be reinforced and challenging questions can result in further clarification of the facts and information.

This is also an excellent strategy for those who may have the responsibility for developing and designing workshops. After the evaluations have been read, the time is right for the planners to review what was done, what the reactions were, and what might be done to improve future sessions.

## **Decision making (7-minute model)**

This requires the exercise of sound judgment if it is to be effective. Skilled decision makers always take time to acquire as much information as possible from valid, credible sources before making a final ruling.

One simple method that serves well in a variety of situations is one known as the "7-minute decision-making model." When time is a great factor, when leaders desire input from others, and when shared ownership is important, this process works.

Step 1 involves having participants spend one minute individually brainstorming all the possible ideas or outcomes they can generate.

Step 2 requires that individuals join together to form groups of no more than five people. One person serves as a recorder for the group. This person begins the round by reading his/her list to the others. In turn, moving around the group, each person adds a new idea or possibility to the master list. The groups are given three minutes to complete this step.

Step 3 is the final round of three minutes, in which the group is challenged to reach consensus on the best idea or possibility suggested by them.

From this point, leaders must decide if there is enough overlap in the data coming from the groups that a clear-cut preference has emerged. If not, an additional round may be required to eliminate all but the top one or two choices as prioritized by the entire group.

This model will not work in every situation; but, if used with discretion, it is a very useful tool.

## **Delphi process**

This is a procedure used to help groups in reaching consensus. It requires people to be involved in identifying, selecting, prioritizing, and ranking a smaller, more selected set of items, from a larger body of possibilities. The greatest strength of the Delphi lies in its potential for minimizing the bias of particular groups which have a hidden agenda and the power to influence.

As an example, suppose a school district wanted to develop criteria for evaluating effective teaching. Round one might begin with a general brainstorming session, in which everyone can participate. All of the possibilities are listed. In round two, the large list is reduced by combining items which are alike, eliminating the obvious, and restating the ones which appear ambiguous.

Round three may also involve all of the participants; or, it may involve representatives from each of the groups which are involved in the decision. In any case, this round requires further refinement of the original data. It could be classifying them or placing them in some order of priority.

Round four, which involves ranking the items, could be done by mail or anonymous ballot. It is at this point where the more influential groups or group members can be made less so by the private nature of the response.

If another round is needed to further clarify the criteria, it should also be done through private response. The obvious drawback to the Delphi process is its lengthy nature. However, its power rests in the flexibility to permit large numbers of people to be involved in generating ideas and sharing the ownership for their ultimate implementation.

## **Demonstration**

This is another common teaching strategy that is quite familiar to most. However, probably for that very reason, it is often ignored as a process which has great potential to impact learners. Visual and experiential learners who are present in any class, workshop, or faculty meeting can benefit from a well-prepared demonstration.

Showing people "how to" is relevant in most situations because it does so much to clarify the sequence of steps involved, expectations for performance, and, if done properly, raises their level of confidence.

## **Displayed thinking**

This process skill is an extremely valuable tool for maintaining attention and involvement, and documenting the work of a group. Most often it is accomplished by getting key points written on large sheets of newsprint and taping them to the walls or other convenient, highly visible locations in the workroom.

Posting the group's work as displayed thinking eliminates the problem of having notes kept by one person on a note pad. When that is done, no one, other than the record keeper, has an opportunity to refer to items that were dealt with earlier in the meeting. Thus, posting ideas on newsprint keeps everything before the group at all times. It makes recall and revision easier. It also provides a historical and sequential record of what has been discussed.

Displayed thinking promotes ownership, active participation, and pride in the achievements of the group.

## **Drama**

This provides an opportunity to create learning opportunities that rival actual situations. It is closely tied to the process skills of role playing and simulations. Perhaps it differs from these in that dialogue, characters, and

setting are all predetermined.

A technique that has been highly successful involves providing groups of six to ten people with some information relevant to the group's needs. In one case, each group of teachers was given a separate research article describing the benefits of cooperative learning or asking better questions, etc.. Then, the groups were challenged to read the article assigned to them, discuss its implications, and create a script to dramatize its value as an instructional strategy. The results are amazing. When people are given the opportunity to work from the right side of the brain, it is truly amazing to observe the use of drama, humor, satire pantomime, etc..

These sketches have been valuable in reinforcing and transferring new learning. Also, the experience has had a powerful bonding effect on the participants. Wise leaders will not overlook drama as a process skill.

### **Dyad, triads, etc.**

These represent some simple ways of getting people involved with one another and the content or issues being addressed. The opportunity to share some recent personal success, or some special source of pride in one's family or organization, with another person is an effective barrier breaker.

### **Effective in service model**

One of the things that has made the Indiana Principal Leadership Academy successful is its faithful adherence to a planning strategy known as the Effective In-Service Model. As the staff or peer facilitators come together to plan for workshops, seminars, or meetings, they consistently use this model as the roadmap for their plans.

It is a dynamic, powerful model that gets terrific results from those who learn to apply it with skill. It has a heavy emphasis on process; in fact, it may be called a process which stands alone on its own merit. The origin of this model is not clear. We learned it from the late Dr. Gerald DeWitt, who was the author of the IPLA. Jerry had so many ideas and process skills catalogued in his files, it's hard to know where he first learned of it, or perhaps, created it. The format that he used had seven elements. As it has been used over the years, we have added three more.

Following is a brief description of each of the ten elements. They are in a sequential order of sorts, but the order isn't important other than there is an opening and a closing. It would be a big mistake to believe that all ten of these are required to be a part of every meeting or workshop. These should be thought of as checks in your planning to help ensure that you have considered the essential elements of effective teaching. If there is good reason not to include one or more, then don't!

**Introduction:** The introduction is the "why bother?" part of the presentation. It includes the rationale which justifies the reason for asking people to devote their time and energy to learning a new skill or acquiring new information. It helps a lot to focus on how people are going to benefit from their new learning. Aren't most of us quite interested to find out "what's in it for me?" In our work, we've found this is the critical element. You either "hook 'em" at this point or you lose them. An audience will begin to make judgments very quickly about the relevance of the material and how it applies to them personally.

**Content:** The content is the actual material or skill to be mastered. It needs to be chosen at a level of challenge which is most appropriate for the current level of maturity, knowledge, and skill of the "learner."

**Process:** The process is the kind of activity selected to engage the learner as an active participant. Often we try to design our activities so that people are producers of information, not just passive recipients of knowledge. We have identified more than 100 process skills which ensure that participants will be active!

Dr. DeWitt used to say, "Process is more important than content." Perhaps this is an exaggeration, perhaps not. But we believe that the content changes as the objectives change. It matters not how much information

or knowledge one has, if one lacks the ability to communicate that knowledge and those ideas to others in ways that are meaningful. (By the way, a good lecture is an excellent teaching process.)

**Practice:** The element of practice is one that is important, especially if the learning calls for the acquisition of new skills. Practice can be done as a simulation, a structured group activity with feedback, or independently with feedback. It is important to remember that practice without feedback is about as productive as fishing without a hook.

**Debriefing:** The process of debriefing is critical. Following an activity, it is essential to take time to discuss or critique what has happened. It is like a check for understanding. It causes people to reflect on what they've learned and how it has benefitted them.

Debriefing methods permit us to discover not only what individuals have learned, but equally important is to allow interaction that reveals to individuals what others in the group have learned. This gives all a basis for comparing and contrasting their learning with that of the others.

**Humor:** The use of humor allows us the opportunity to maintain a sense of perspective about ourselves and what we are doing. When our work becomes heavy, as often it does, we need an emotional release. Laughter is the medicine we need. They say humor has the power to heal. Usually humor creeps into our work spontaneously, but should it not, it is a good practice to have planned it intentionally.

**Follow-up:** The research is very clear about the need for follow-up. Once skills have been taught or new expectations set, without a continued effort to keep focused, people quickly return to old ways. It will take repeated efforts to get new practices imbedded or institutionalized as an integral part of routines. Deciding which strategies can be used to ensure the greatest amount of transfer is something to be considered up front and before the fact.

**Team Building:** Human development activity is another label for this element. Bill McColly reminds people that there is a big difference between team building and building a team. We are convinced that one of the common reasons why groups fail is the lack of time and attention devoted to breaking down the barriers between and among the members.

We have found that if a few minutes of each workshop or meeting can be devoted to some simple activity which helps people get better acquainted, the degree of rapport and trust within the group increases significantly. As a result, more time is available for productive group planning. Also, there is more likely to be a greater sense of ownership and pride in the final outcome.

**Evaluation:** This is another aspect of planning that is sorely neglected. Usually little thought is given as to how actual or intended outcomes of teaching or training will be measured. Consideration should be given to assessing the outcomes for the participants and the outcomes of the processes and presenters used in the program itself.

It also can be noted that we don't assume that all assessments are quantitative. Not every aspect of our work lends itself to numerical interpretation. Qualitative measures are equally valid if chosen properly.

**Celebration:** The least likely element for us to include is that of celebration. As we have told people in recent months, if we educators wait for our governor, or our "education" president, to reward us for the good things being accomplished in our schools, then we'll all receive our recognition posthumously! Therefore, building in a celebration of our individual and collective successes is time well spent!

In conclusion, these ten elements of the Effective In-Service Model have the potential to improve the quality of all situations where learning is the goal. Workshops, seminars, meetings, and certainly your classrooms would be greatly enhanced if people responsible for teaching and training would use them as checks against their plan to see that in their planning all the right questions have been addressed.

## **Eliminating barriers**

This is the art of predicting what circumstances, which people, or whose values are likely to stand, either directly or indirectly, in the path of change or goal attainment. The skill is to exercise the appropriate intervention. It can be as simple as providing some safe, quick get-acquainted activity when people who must come together are unfamiliar with one another or the setting. It can be as difficult as discovering what must be eliminated to reach a contract settlement.

## **Empowerment**

This is the process of helping others to discover and use the skills and abilities they possess to increase their personal effectiveness, as well as that of the organization.

Many administrators have misunderstood this concept. They have understood it to involve giving away power to others. Wrong! Empowerment is not giving away power. It is the process of improving productivity and morale by involving people in the decisions which directly affect them.

It does not mean that people make all of the decisions, nor do they dictate priorities. Empowerment does mean that people have reasonable opportunities to give input, to discuss, and to share in identifying goals and influencing decisions within carefully prescribed parameters.

The key to success is determining the parameters. People need to understand clearly which arenas of the organization are open to their participation and to what extent. They need to know when they can make decisions, when their input is advisable, and when it will not be needed.

## **Expert (becoming an)**

The process of becoming an expert reflects two very important concepts about being a professional. First, everyone has special interests and unique abilities. The true professional is one who has created an effective blend of ability and interest, tying it to the second concept, commitment to professional growth.

Making the commitment to becoming as knowledgeable and skillful as one can be is the mark of a self-directed pro.

## **Evaluation of personnel**

This is one of the most essential tasks required of an administrator. Actually, evaluation requires the exercise of a complex set of skills. The process of personnel evaluation consists of the systematic use of goal-setting, collaborative conferencing, constructive confrontation, data gathering, data analysis, building rapport/trust, and objective written documentation.

This may be one of those skill areas in which one may feel that there is always more to learn, more to practice, more to experience. What one discovers is that, because of the infinite range of individual differences, there is a like number of possible applications of these skills.

## **Facilitating**

Here, one utilizes a set of skills, enabling one to be of assistance to others in a teaching or training situation. Expert facilitators are familiar with the principles of small-group learning. They understand the various roles that individual group members play in making a learning environment either healthy or dysfunctional.

Typically, facilitators assist the teacher/trainer by helping keep the group on task, answering questions, ensuring effective participation by all members, clarifying instructions, distributing materials, etc..

### **Failure model**

This is a valuable teaching tool, often used as a right-brain activity. It can lead participants into a discussion focused around a new proposal or an idea for effecting change. For example, if one wanted administrators to conduct more effective faculty meetings, he might begin by asking the participants to brainstorm a list of all the things which they could do to absolutely guarantee a failure. Usually this is fun because everyone has a mindset about dull, boring teachers' meetings.

As an analogical teaching method, this requires people to draw upon prior, or imagined, life experience. In either case, it sets the stage for using their own collective experiences to develop a more positive vision for improvement - success model.

### **Fishbowl**

This is a process which may be useful in introducing new information, getting reactions to an idea or proposal, or debriefing a presentation.

Basically, it requires four to six volunteers, sufficiently informed, to carry on a conversation or to share perceptions on the issues being addressed. This small group forms into a small circle with space for one extra chair. Around the outside of this circle, the other participants form a larger circle of chairs, close enough to enable each to hear the small group's conversation.

The small group is given instructions regarding the topic of discussion. As they talk, if anyone outside the inner circle wishes to participate, he/she simply moves in and occupies the open seat. As soon as the one who is speaking finishes, that signals the new person's turn to speak. Upon concluding his/her statement, the person leaves the chair and returns to the outer circle.

Obviously, the overall size of the group will determine how appropriate this process might be in a given setting.

### **Focus writing**

This is, as the term implies, the process of more clearly focusing one's thoughts on a specific topic, experience, or issue. Unlike the process of free thought writing, this process, by intent, is meant to limit, to narrow the scope of the writer's thoughts.

At some point in an important lesson or training session, the wise trainer may assign time for participants to capture their feelings and perceptions on paper. For example, one may choose to evaluate the effectiveness of a lesson by asking people to identify what new skills, knowledge, or insights they have gained, and how these new insights will help them to improve performance.

### **Forced field analysis**

This is a problem-solving format developed by the noted psychologist, Dr. Kurt Lewin. In applying this skill, one takes a blank sheet of paper and, at the top, writes a clear, concise statement of the desired goal to be achieved. From mid-point on that line, another line is drawn vertically to the bottom of the page, dividing the page in half.

In the space at the top of the left column, write "negative forces." In the space at the top of the right column, write "positive forces." It then becomes a matter of brainstorming all of the forces which would be potential barriers in

achieving the desired results. Conversely, one also needs to list all of those forces which could assist in making progress toward the goal.

In some cases, it might be useful to further divide the columns by splitting them into categories of human resources, positive and negative. And the other category would be all physical, environment, and material resources. In either event, careful thought needs to be given to these items. Prioritizing them in their order of relative degree of impact can be helpful; but perhaps most important is the thought given to how to minimize or eliminate the barriers and how to get the most from the positive forces.

### **Forecasting**

This is a process used to get groups or individuals to take what facts and information they have at hand, applying this data to relevant past experiences and to present circumstances. Then, through the process of comparing and contrasting the data, past and present, develop a prediction regarding what the future is likely to be.

Someone once said, "If we don't learn from mistakes of the past, we are doomed to repeat them." Another, more recent bit of advice, "If you can't predict the future, invent it!"

A useful application of this process would be to have knowledgeable groups, each with different perspectives, engage the same topic and develop their own respective view of the future. For example, how would the view of schools of the future be, if developed by a group of parents, a group of high school seniors, a group of elementary teachers, the school board, a group of building administrators, and a group of business persons?

### **Free thought writing**

This is another analogical process skill used to get the participants "loosened up" and prepared to think. It is most useful in settings where creativity is expected. It is a method of generating ideas, particularly if diversity is desired. Instructions can make this activity open-ended; or, one can limit the process somewhat by providing a topic.

In one instance, if you want people to begin thinking about school improvement without giving them the specific topic, you might have them write whatever comes into their minds about their own school experiences.

In another instance, you might limit the participants' thinking to a special topic. For example, have them write about student activities, which is but one of the many possible targets of school improvement.

In free thought writing, order, sequence, logic, and completeness are most important outcomes. This can all come after the ideas have emerged.

### **Goal action plan**

This is a structured format designed to assist one in developing a plan of action. It can be quite simple in its format and may include such basics as a statement of the objective to be attained, a list of the steps involved, and some target dates.

Some formats are more complex and require greater thought to specific details. For example, the format used for IPLA and Experiential Program for Preparing School Principals (EPPSP) include a vision statement, a goal statement, steps to be taken, resources needed, time lines, predictable barriers, preventions, levels of success, and celebration.

Regardless of the format, the idea is to get one's plan committed to writing. Somehow, those who have used goal action plans do tend to report a greater sense of conscience if they fail to follow through on written plans.



## **Homework**

We often associate this only with studies assigned by classroom teachers and completed outside of the regular classroom time. However, there are times when adult learners need to be involved in this type of activity. J. Michael Palardy offered six elements for this process in a 1988 NASSP publication: 1) Work hard to ensure that all who have a vested interest in the organization understand the need and purpose of work that must be done outside of normal classroom hours. 2) Vary the nature of the assignments, attempting to address different learning styles. 3) Individualize homework as much as possible. Although everyone may get the same information at the same time, there could still be many opportunities to apply it in many different ways. 4) Demonstrate and clarify how to do the homework, avoiding the assumption that everyone has all of the experience, prerequisite skills, and knowledge to practice effectively. 5) Coordinate homework with other teachers, or other significant activities which could detract from the potential value of the homework assignment. 6) Evaluate, record, and return homework quickly.

## **Hooking**

This process skill has to do with making reference to current ideas, concepts, or facts, and relating them to some previous point of learning or discussion.

It is a type of reinforcement. Making hooks from the present to the past helps to maintain a sequence, or make ideas more relevant when they may appear unrelated. It enriches learning by helping people associate and connect ideas and principles, rather than having information which has less meaning in isolation.

For example, if the topic focused on teaching the process of clustering, one might ask, "Do you recall when we learned to use brainstorming? Can anyone see any similarities in these two processes?" By creating this hook, the learner now has the opportunity to compare and contrast the two and perhaps will see some subtleties which may otherwise have gone unnoticed.

## **Human development activities**

These activities are designed to break barriers between people, to aid them in feeling more comfortable with one another. HDAs are essentially team-building strategies. An example of a barrier breaker would be the "scavenger hunt." It is a list of 10-12 questions about things one would expect to find in any group of 12 or more. Each question begins with the stem: "Find someone who...", followed by such things as, "enjoys playing bridge," etc.

A team-building activity is one which requires cooperation, everyone working together, or the task cannot be completed. One might give each group member a piece of a puzzle; then all must share and participate in order to solve the problem. The range and difficulty of HDAs will depend upon the level of group's comfort.

## **Humor**

This is a process which will serve well in nearly any situation. As the Reverend Joe Wicks would remind us, "Laughter is good for the soul." Skillful presenters are masters at using humor to illustrate major points. They also use it as a way to change the mood of the group. There are times when a topic can have heavy emotional overtones. When the emotion reaches a climax, it can be a quick one-liner that can bring the mood of the audience back up to a normal level.

Good stories or humorous situations can be used to begin a seminar, preclude a break, follow a break to lead the group back into the session, or conclude a session. Reverend Wicks also reminds us to "look for the truth in humor."

## **In-basket**

These are useful tools for getting participants involved in simulations drawn from real-life situations. Individuals can develop a descriptive scenario, based on an actual problem situation with which they would like to help. Small groups can read and discuss the problem; then each can share its solution with the entire group. Thus, the person submitting the problem has the benefit of a wide range of solutions.

It is worthy to note that Principals' Assessment Centers make extensive use of in-basket problems to help evaluate the potential of aspiring administrators. The use of in-baskets can be adapted to the classroom, as well as general use with teachers, parents, staff, etc., in seeking solutions to local problems.

## **Influencing**

This is another of those skills which may appear simple; but, in reality, it is a very sophisticated process. To influence others requires a solid understanding of the principles of motivation. It also requires a very clear sense of one's own identity, style, values, and motives.

One excellent source of information would be Elias Porter's Strength Deployment Inventory. It is based upon Porter's psychological studies with Carl Jung and Karen Horney. It describes four basic motivational styles. Porter developed highly reliable scales to identify what each of the four will respond to as rewards, and what they will tend to avoid or reject.

Few things are always predictable; but, if one expects to influence others in a positive way, it does help to understand the fundamentals of what motivates them.

## **Inquiry**

This is the process of seeking truth. It is the commitment to see the other side of the issue. It is being dissatisfied with simple answers to complex problems. It is remembering that there are two sides to every story, and one is wise not to judge prematurely. As the guru of gifted education, Dr. Roger Taylor said, "Beware of the man with only one book!" To inquire is a quest for more information, a deeper understanding, and the desire to know that decisions were made on the basis of the best knowledge available.

## **Introducing dissonance**

This is the process of giving people A Whack on the Side of the Head, as the title of Roger Van Ochs' book so eloquently states it. It has been said that only a wet baby likes a change. And Dr. Gary Phillips often says, "Everyone is for progress, just so long as it doesn't require change."

People are generally going to be satisfied with status quo unless there is good reason to change. Usually, that good reason is due to some real or perceived discomfort or disruption of the status quo.

The effective leader accepts this human tendency and uses it to his/her advantage. For example, if one expects teachers to adopt a new teaching strategy, like cooperative learning, it is essential for them to "see and believe" that the payoff, to them personally, will be significant enough to justify expending the time and energy to learn the new skill(s).

To create dissonance, a demonstration involving teachers at a faculty meeting could be done to dramatically illustrate the power of cooperative learning, by taking an issue or problem and letting six teachers work as a cooperative team. Pit them against 12 individuals working alone. Safe to say, with few exceptions, the outcome of

the group will be superior to that achieved by any one individual.

Cognitive dissonance tends to fracture mindsets!

### **Inventories**

The use of personal inventories, or standardized personal assessment instruments, has the potential to help break down barriers between people, promote a greater sense of appreciation for individual differences, and to provide research-based information on a wide range of human qualities.

In IPLA, use has been made of a number of such instruments including the Strength Deployment Inventory, 4Mat, Gregorc's Style Delineator, Myers-Briggs, O.S.U. Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, etc.. The use of these inventories evokes discussion among participants and serves as an essential lead-in for identifying differences and similarities within the group.

By using these relatively non-threatening sharing and discussion opportunities, one can then move groups to explore issues of greater depth and significance such as core values or "We Believe" statements that would serve to guide a school community toward consensus for school improvement priorities.

### **Jigsaw (Cross teaching)**

This process skill is drawn from the strategies for cooperative learning. The power of the process is in its capacity to disseminate and communicate a large volume of data within a relatively short time.

Most often it is used to bring a diverse group of people to a level of common knowledge and understanding by sharing the responsibility for consuming, synthesizing, and teaching the information.

For example, a group of educators comes together to learn more about peer coaching. A facilitator who wants to quickly bring the group "up to speed" might select three articles of similar length on the topic. Have the group count off by three. Assign a different article to the one's, two's and three's. The groups each read their respective articles, discuss the salient points, agree on those which seem most relevant, and then having synthesized the information, each group teaches the others. Thus, everyone gets the benefit of the important concepts without having to read all three in detail.

### **Learning styles (responding to)**

This is a process which every knowledgeable teacher/trainer must keep in mind when developing any unit of instruction. By now, surely every professional educator is aware of the growing body of research regarding the special attributes of the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

Probably, the two best-known and most widely used learning styles inventories are those that have been developed by Rita Dunn and Bernice McCarthy. There are many others which are being used in school systems where they are developed.

It is unlikely, at this point, that it matters so much which system one uses, so long as one can apply the basic principles. In the Academy, we find that the Style Delineator, created by Dr. Anthony Gregorc, is a helpful tool in getting people acquainted with preferred styles and modalities.

### **Lesson planning**

This involves the ability to use some guidelines drawn from research on effective teaching to develop a solid

lesson design. As Madeline Hunter warned us, "There are no absolutes in teaching!" Therefore, the knowledgeable principal will always use a standard list of the elements of effective teaching as considerations, not absolutes, to be required in each and every lesson.

A list of such considerations might include: 1. How will the lesson be introduced so that learners are engaged immediately? Research has shown that the first few minutes are critical in getting people on task. 2. How will the specific objectives be shared in a way that "hooks" the learner emotionally. What is the rationale? Learners have a right to know why someone would bother to ask them to invest their time and energy in acquiring new skills or information. 3. What materials and activities should be used? They must not only cover the material at an appropriate level of challenge, but should also be selected with various learning styles in mind. 4. What must the teacher do to adequately demonstrate or model the skill to be learned? What opportunities will be provided for the learners to practice their new skills, either individually or in small groups? 5. What efficient method can be used to monitor learning, so that it is safe to assume that everyone has the information before moving ahead? If it is necessary to reteach, what assignment can be given to those who are ready to move on? Is the assignment busywork, or essential? 6. Is there any need to evaluate the outcomes of the lesson? How can this be done effectively and efficiently? 7. In bringing closure to the lesson, how will it be summarized? How will the critical points be highlighted? Do they hook back to the objective? How will the critical points be highlighted? Do they hook back to the objective? What would serve as a motivational lead-in to the next lesson? If homework is to be given, how much time is needed to make the assignment, so that students feel that it is important enough for them to do? How will the homework be evaluated, and how much does it count toward the grade?

These are but a few of the important considerations that one might find on a list of elements for making effective decisions about lesson design.

## **Leveling**

This is the process of ensuring open, honest communication. Dr. Gerald DeWitt, IPLA, was a great advocate of this particular skill. Being level with a person is simply being honest. Jerry used to say, "Look them in the eye and tell them the truth!" (Sometimes people forget to practice this.)

## **Levels of learning**

This is an interesting way of thinking about competence. There are four levels to this process, and all of us are at one level or another at all times in everything we do.

Level one: As one begins a new venture, usually it is at the stage of unconscious incompetence. We do not even know that we do not know!

Level two: As one gains experience and knowledge, it becomes a matter of conscious incompetence. Now, at least, we recognize that we do not know!

Level three: As one continues to grow and mature, a quiet confidence is achieved. This is conscious competence, or, we know that we know!

Level four: As one becomes truly expert at something, automaticity sets in. Things are done with such ease and grace that it becomes unconscious competence. Now we are operating at a level of sophistication which suggests that we do not know how good we really are!

This is the process of achieving personal and professional maturity.

## **Linking**

This is the process of helping another person find the right resource, the right connection. This could be in the form of putting someone in touch with another person who has similar interests, has needed information, or has the necessary skills. It could as easily be in the form of linking someone with the right material, research, book, notes, etc..

### **Logging**

This is just another term for keeping a journal or log. A log book is different than a diary. It is not a record of intimate personal reflections. Dr. Maurice Gibbons, Simon Fraser University, speaks of keeping a working journal. It has three sections: ideas, plans, and projects.

Regardless of how one might choose to set up the format, the real value is in getting ideas and plans for action down on paper. How many of us have lost a good idea for an innovation because we could not recall it?

### **Majority rule**

This is the widely practiced method of achieving agreement on an issue. It involves a simple vote by the participants; and the majority rules. This is a quick and effective way to reach a decision; but, it may not always be the best. Majority rule doesn't address the issue of ownership for the decision to any great extent. For example, if 20 people vote on an important matter and the vote is 11 to 9, there is no guarantee that the minority (of 9) will feel any obligation to support the outcome. In fact, it would not be uncommon for some to be subversive.

### **MBWA**

This is a process that has recently received much attention. Management By Walking Around (MBWA) is one of those skills which effective leaders practice intuitively. Successful teachers and trainers do the same.

It is important to get around - throughout the physical space of one's area of responsibility. Whether it be around the building, up and down the rows of the classroom, or moving from table to table in a training situation, it pays big dividends!

The presence, the physical proximity of the leader, creates the opportunity for improved communications, proactive leadership, a greater sense of ownership, loyalty, etc.. "Catch `em doing good" has become a byword for those who understand that successful organizations are the result of clearly-communicated goals, enthusiastic leadership, pride in what is achieved, and a sense of ownership for what goes on within the organization.

### **Mental rehearsal**

This is the process of preparing oneself for an important event or meeting by standing in front of a mirror and practicing the behaviors one desires to communicate. If not in front of a mirror, then, perhaps a quiet place to be alone and concentrate clearly on what needs to be said and how it is to be said.

### **Mentoring**

This is the process of shadowing, or spending time under the tutelage of one who is an expert or master at what he/she does. This is what student teaching and the beginning teacher program are all about. However, in our profession, there are many other opportunities to use the same concept in a limited way. Few of us ever take advantage of the opportunities which are available. Why couldn't aspiring administrators spend time observing and talking with an established veteran principal?

For that matter, why couldn't neophyte principals spend time visiting in a school and shadowing the master principal? Why not use successful business people as mentors?

Too few of our universities and local school districts are taking advantage of a valuable educational process.

### **Metaphors and analogies**

This is the process of using words to create more vivid images in the minds of the audience. Words carefully chosen are powerful, but words used to create pictures, or slogans, can generate emotion in the listener or reader. When people are involved emotionally, they are more likely to remember the point.

For example, when asked to complete this analogy by drawing a picture to go along with words, one young man did this. The statement was, "Leadership is like...(draw a picture), because...(complete the sentence with words). "The young man drew a picture of a silk tie. He completed the sentence, "Leadership is like a silk tie; it can make you look good, or it can hang you!" An unforgettable image of leadership.

### **Mini-Lecture**

Despite the IPLA claim that process is more important than content, there is definitely a time and place for content to be delivered in the form of a good, old fashioned lecture. When an educator makes a calculated choice to use the lecture as the most appropriate teaching method for the situation and to achieve a specific outcome, that is a professional decision.

Such a time might be when, as a professional, one decides that it is important, for efficient, or everyone to get the same information at the same time, same place, and in the same way. The use of a brief, tightly-focused lecturette can serve as one of several possibilities, given those circumstances.

Generally, the mini-lecture lasts no longer than 15-20 minutes. As with any such form of discourse where one appears front and center before an audience, the purpose can vary with the need. It could be done to inform, to raise questions, to inspire, motivate, challenge, or instruct the participants. Often it is used to set the stage for some total group activity or task.

### **Morale building**

As a skill, this process is imperative. Morale is more than something nice to have; it is essential to the health and productivity of the organization. When asked to define morale, IPLA groups have used words and phrases like:

"Morale reflects the emotional climate of the school. It has to do with the sense of ownership and commitment of the staff, students, and parents for what happens at school. Morale determines the basic culture of the school. It suggests what it is that people value, support, and get rewarded as they achieve the goals of the school community. ...common interests ...shared values ...willingness to endure, persist in the face of difficulty ...enthusiasm ...vitality ...success."

An excellent resource book, Administrators Handbook for Improving Faculty Morale, is available from PDK, Bloomington, Indiana. The handbook outlines some critical aspects related to building morale. Among them, the authors listed leadership style, reward systems, achievement, distribution of the workload, facilities, extra-school factors, and the management of conflict. The process becomes a matter of choosing the appropriate strategies to address these with positive results.

### **Motivation**

This is another of those processes which the successful trainer, teacher, or leader must master. Without skills in this area, one will be handicapped in moving others to action.

There are many resources available to assist leaders in gaining additional understanding and skill related to motivation. One might refer to the work of Madeline Hunter. She has developed a concept which she calls "attribute theory."

Within it, she lists seven factors which impact motivation. These are easily adapted to the classroom or use with teachers, parents, etc..

The work of Elias Porter, as reflected in the Strength Deployment Inventory, reveals many well-founded psychological principles of motivational theory.

Theory Z, the One Minute Manager, and the list goes on. The most important point about this process is that one have a theory to practice!

### **Movies of the mind**

This is the process of imagining. It is running a "movie of the mind" to project successful outcomes to difficult situations, to create visions of the best one can be.

Skilled facilitators are able to engage groups in silent film exercises where the emphasis needs to be on behavior and action, as opposed to language and dialogue.

Once silent films have been created, the insights which are generated by the group are analyzed for their potential to lead to more effective behavior and action.

### **NEAT**

This is an acronym for a process of personnel supervision. In working with people as a leader, it is predictable that one will eventually encounter an unacceptable level of performance. The basic process for addressing situations of that kind is imbedded in NEAT.

**N** stands for notice. The first step in correcting an unacceptable situation is to let those involved know what is wrong. Clearly, most people want to do a good job.

**E** stands for expectation. It is common sense that one must be able to clearly articulate what job performance standards are required. Furthermore, a responsible leader will be specific by giving concrete examples or guidelines as to how one might improve. The trick is to recognize the level of competence of the person in question. A successful, self-directed individual may prefer to be involved in the process of determining how performance outcomes could be improved (ownership).

On the other hand, one might be dealing with a novice, or less self-directed individual, who would value just being told how to do it.

**A** stands for assistance. To order or suggest improvement and walk away forever is to be unrealistic, if not irresponsible. Leaders have the obligation to offer support, encouragement, and even additional training for those unable to perform at an acceptable level (the courts say so!).

**T** stands for time. A reasonable time frame, or calendar of due dates, is helpful in assuring improvement. One cannot expect immediate improvement, but neither can the system tolerate performance with no gains. Therefore, the pressure of time can keep the process moving toward improvement, reassignment, or termination of contract.

## **Needs assessment**

This refers to the process of determining what is needed in a given situation, by a specific group or individual, to bring about improved performance. Usually, these needs are identified through a systematic process of interviewing, testing, questionnaire, etc.. The caution is to be careful of needs assessments, as people may, at times, not know what they need! However, it is still an extremely valuable tool.

## **Negotiations**

This is the process of reaching agreement through discussion. Generally, it is a strategy used when two groups or individuals become locked in a conflict over something each values, shares in a degree of control, or has some mutual right of possession. The conflict is heightened by the fact that each fears a loss of control over his/her own destiny.

Agreement can be reached easily in some instances, or the conflict can escalate, literally into war. The wise leader will have a formal, systematic process in place to help resolve such disagreements. In the literature, there are several models from which to choose. Certainly, most school corporations have adopted one to serve the purpose at that level. However, it is equally important at the building level that a process exists to assist in bringing about compromise or resolving full-blown conflict.

## **Networking**

This is a process involving building a resource pool of people who can offer information, support when times are tough, react to ideas, help with in service, and make referrals to new resources.

In addition to these benefits, perhaps the most rewarding aspect comes with the acquisition of new friends. As S. L. Levine reported in a 1989 study, "Teaching breeds loneliness." If this be true, then all the more reason to develop a professional support network. There is no need to feel like you have to go it alone.

## **NLP**

This is another process acronym, which stands for neurolinguistic programming. Neurolinguistics is a science of communication, growing from the research of Virginia Satir. It is her belief that people have the need to be accepted and to be reassured that they are okay. In gaining a sense of belonging, one tends to adopt the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of the group. It is in the subtlety of these messages that rapport is built. Thus, in building rapport and trust with one other person, careful attention is given to these aspects of communication.

For example, in listening to the verbal cues given by others, one can learn how they tend to interact with the world. Those who use phrases that include a predominance of words like, "I see"... "in my view", or, "I get the picture," are probably visual processors of information.

Those who interact, using phrases like, "I hear what you're saying"... "It sounds as if," or, "The tone of things is..." may be auditory learners.

And those who can be heard saying things like, "That touches me"... "I feel that," or "Run that by me again," may process data kinetically.

Satir's work suggests that, if one uses words which are likely to help the other person relate comfortably to what is being said, two things are accomplished. One, it enhances the likelihood that understanding will be achieved. Two, it enhances the opportunity for building rapport.



As an emerging science, NLP holds promise for improving relationships and communications.

### **Paraphrasing**

This is the process of restating what someone else has said in order to show that they have been understood. In his book, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey reminded us to “seek first to understand, then to be understood.” An element of active listening, paraphrasing is a powerful tool in assuring that we have made the effort to understand the other person’s point. If we have not been successful, our attempt to restate provides the other person an opportunity to clarify. This is not to be confused with parroting, or repeating verbatim.

### **Pathfinding**

Joel Barker spoke about the capacity of some to thrive on change. They seem to embrace it with both grace and enthusiasm. Often, they are the dreamers who assist in directing the course of events, inspiring new ways of thinking, and potentially changing the world. How are these individuals able to find the pathway to the promise when the rest of us cannot, at times, find our way to the door? Referred to as “paradigm pioneers” by Barker, these individuals explain their success through a four-part process: 1) They recognize the potential of “big” ideas. They see new possibilities for solving old problems. 2) They have the courage to take action without having complete data to show the way. They are willing to take calculated risks, moving ahead, unsure of the outcome. They have a strong sense of trust in their personal intuition. 3) Pathfinders are in it for the long haul. They have patience and persistence. 4) They constantly monitor their progress and evaluate improvement in terms of where they started, where they currently are, and where they are going.

### **Peer coaching**

Art Costas, Pam Robbins, and others have been instrumental in attempting to foster the improvement of teaching and the quality of learning through the efforts of teachers and administrators working from a coaching perspective, as opposed to a judgmental, evaluator base. The process involves the same basic skills and tools as those cited in teacher evaluation. However, the emphasis shifts more of the ownership and sense of purpose to the teacher. Dr. Larry Barber, PDK, has stated that no study conducted over the past 100 years has shown a positive correlation between teacher evaluation and the improvement of instruction. If this is true, then what would be lost in trying to find other avenues for bringing about improvement in teaching for learning? Coaching is determined by teachers setting their own goals for improving their skills in the classroom. The teacher and principal (coach) collaborate to define what criteria will be useful in determining if the goal has been reached. Prior to classroom visits, the principal and teacher agree on what type of data will be gathered, as well as how it will be utilized. The post observation conference is characterized by more teacher talk than the traditional evaluation conference which tends to be dominated by feedback from the evaluator. The principal acts more as a colleague and facilitator than “boss.”

### **Peer collaboration**

This is an effective teaching process to engage people of similar interests, age, abilities, professional status, or other criteria to define “peer.” They are then encouraged to work together in a mutually supportive and beneficial relationship. The idea here is to promote cooperation, collegiality, and growth by empowering peers with the skills necessary to observe one another at work, gather relevant data, discuss results, and determine what steps are appropriate to ensure continuous growth.

### **Piggybacking**

This is simply the process of one person building on someone else’s comments, by adding to the original

thought in ways that extend, enrich, or embellish.

### **Plop**

Although somewhat obscure, this is an important process to use with teams. It simply describes what happens when one tosses out a "bright, wonderful" idea for group approval, which just goes "plop!" No one picks up on, or even acknowledges it. The importance in understanding the process is in being able to move on without being hurt or offended by the "rejection." This would be indicative of an effective team.

### **Practice**

This is a most familiar process. The problem seems to lie in that very fact. Practicing one's skills often becomes passe. Like the commitment to lifelong learning, continual practice takes persistence. Without it, the tendency is to fall into the trap of careless habits, little oversights and omissions, things which truly spell the difference between mediocrity and excellence. Making the effort to be good at what one does is worth the time and effort it takes to hone the skills.

### **Preteaching**

This is a strategy which can pay big dividends in terms of motivation, involvement and success of the learners. Preteaching is merely taking time to "plant some seeds" ahead of the time when the actual teaching or training is to be done.

Often, it is used as a strategy to help lower achievers. Imagine pulling aside some of those who have been less successful and giving them a few of the important concepts a day or two early. One might even give them some specific role to play or question to answer. By getting the essential data ahead of time, they will have the best advantage.

Sometimes getting a little edge on the competition has a positive motivational effect. Specific involvement can result in a greater sense of ownership for the outcomes.

Structuring for success and rewarding it can break the failure syndrome if practiced enough.

The same concept can work with adults who have negative attitudes toward change or any new idea. Plant the seeds ahead of time and give them an active part to play at the time the idea is actually introduced.

### **Predict and prevent**

This is a process that has powerful potential, but as with so many of these skills, it seems so simple we often take it for granted. People just forget to practice what they know.

Predict and prevent is a basic problem-solving strategy. It requires analyzing a situation, generally one that is very familiar, and, then, applying an intervention which would block or prevent the predictable from occurring.

For example, Dr. Gary Phillips generally talks about this process when discussing effective ways of managing unruly kids. Most administrators agree that less than 10 percent of the students account for 90 percent of the problems. Gary asks the question: "If you were going to be away from class for a day, could you predict which student is most likely to create a problem, and when?" Of course, most educators believe they could. If one can predict who, when, or even why, then why not develop a systematic plan to make it much less likely that the

predictable situation will happen?

Again, this is but one example of its use. With some imagination, one can see applications for other situations involving adults.

### **Process observer**

This is a skill that is unique, but with a fairly broad range of applications. When groups of people are interacting, working together, it is often important for them to get feedback about the effectiveness of their efforts. Just as teachers, athletes, or any performers cannot always see themselves as others do, neither can a group observe itself objectively.

By assigning one person to specifically attend to prescribed criteria drawn from the research on small group dynamics, it is possible for a group to monitor its own behavior. Within a group, this role needs to be shared, so that no one person becomes saddled with the responsibility.

Criteria often includes watching to see who might dominate, who is not involved, who is argumentative, who is the peacemaker, how decisions are made, priorities identified, etc..

A skilled process observer who can offer valuable insights is an important part of a group's ability to stay on task and accomplish its mission.

### **Proof of excellence**

While it seems that everyone is for excellence, and everyone talks about it, few are willing to work hard enough to achieve it. In setting goals, it is important to consider how to measure accomplishment. What are the criteria? How will we know if we succeed? How much is enough?

Answering these questions is an important part of the process. It is also helpful to ask the question, "If we pursue this goal, yet fail to reach it, will we be better off for having made the effort?" Another important question is related to the research which suggests that to attain a goal at the 100% level may require an investment of as much time and energy to go the final 10% as it took to reach the 90% level. If this is true, then we really need to know why it is essential that we succeed at the 100% level. Sometimes, the outcome justifies the investment; however, wise leaders know when to settle for less than the very best, as well as when less than the best is unacceptable.

### **Public relations**

This is the skill to "tell one's story" with impact. In the 1989 Neophyte Seminar at Nashville, Indiana, principals brain stormed a list of possibilities for improving the public relations image of the public schools. Educators generally have been "taught" that humility is the best policy. One does not blow one's own trumpet so to speak. If one is doing a good job, it will be recognized and duly rewarded. That has been the mindset.

The activities which were suggested through the brainstorming session could be classified by some broad headings:

1. Ways to more effectively involve parents in the educational process.
2. Methods for getting word to the media and actually getting it in ink!
3. Establishing meaningful partnerships with the private sector.
4. Finding ways to invite people into the school...open it up.
5. The use of volunteer groups to help in public relations efforts.
6. Enlisting the support of staff and students in polishing the image.

In all, there were nearly ninety specific ideas which were shared. Although principals have not been trained to emphasize the public relations role, collectively, they have lots of ideas drawn from their individual success stories. They now realize that, if the story is going to be told, they must do it. Now is not the time for false humility!

### **Purposeful redundancy**

This is the judicious use of repetition. The research of Joyce and Showers would suggest that from the time a new practice is attempted until it is used routinely (unconscious competence), it may require nearly 30 repetitions (to achieve that level of expertise).

If this is true, then we need not apologize if people are exposed to the same information more than once. However, the trick is to ensure that the information or skill is presented in a variety of ways and imbedded in different modalities, situations, etc..

Practice makes perfect!

### **Pyramid groups**

This is a process for educators adapted from the Amway Corporation. It is a communications tool which can be used to quell rumors, enhance public relations, conduct opinion polls, or simply provide information.

The basic concept is for the chief administrator to have a group of, perhaps ten, people who are directly accessible. Each of these has a group of five people who they can reach quickly; that group has another five. At the fourth level (fourth phone call down the chain), more than 1,000 people can be reached.

### **Quality circles**

This is a process skill that has been adapted by educators from the Japanese management system. It is built around the belief that people at the "grass roots" level have a unique perspective of how the system works and have ideas about how things can be improved. It has become a popular strategy to involve staff in seeking solutions to problems that affect them in the workplace.

Because everyone cannot be involved directly, the quality circles process also incorporates the concept of pyramiding. Each staff person, who represents a grade level or department, filters ideas and information through a pyramid group to elicit feedback from a broader audience. Decisions, then, are based upon direct and indirect participation of everyone in the organization.

Principals who are using quality circles as a strategy for their advisory groups are careful to include parents, students, and non-certified staff.

### **Reading (selective, purposeful)**

This is a process that has at least two important functions for the leader/facilitator. First, there are those occasions when everyone needs to get the same information, at the same time, and in the same way. One may choose a mini-lecture, transparencies, a video, film, etc.. Another option is that of selective reading; the content is chosen carefully for a specific purpose. In such situations, thoughtful consideration ought to be given to the length of the article or chapter assigned. In most training situations, 30 minutes would be the maximum. The reading usually would be debriefed through the use of a well-designed, small group activity.

Second, the self-directed professional will read to keep abreast of current trends and recent research. Reading aside from professional journals, etc., will ensure that one continues to develop a wider scope of interests and a

broader knowledge base.

Selective reading, as a process for delivering accurate, pertinent information, should not be overlooked.

### **Re-negotiating**

This is the process of systematically reviewing the terms, or outcomes, of an agreement that had been previously reached by two, or more, parties. It sounds simple enough; but, often people accept ineffective procedures, or outcomes, because of a "formal" agreement.

As a process, re-negotiating has the best opportunity for success when specific terms have been built into the original agreement that allow for periodic review. Even if they have not, and even if there is no "formal" agreement, the effective leader will exercise the right to identify how "what is" is falling short of "what should be." This information is then shared with the other party with the expectation that corrections can be made through renewed discussion.

The process, as defined here, is based on the win/win style of negotiations, not the typical win/lose style that characterizes most board and union confrontations.

### **Review/preview**

Previewing the agenda of activities and the intended outcomes for any class or meeting ought to be an integral part of one's game plan. It helps to focus attention on the purpose and expectation. In the planning stage it is a major aid in relating activities to outcomes, and prior to the meeting itself, it helps participants understand what is expected of them.

The review is important to help affirm that outcomes have been achieved and that the level of understanding or commitment has been communicated. Also, from what we know about learning styles, it is essential for many learners to have the sequence and order of events, plus the closure, provided by the process of review/preview.

### **Rewards**

This is the process of systematically rewarding achievement and progress. Recently, the work of Tom Peters has pointed out that effective leaders routinely practice rewarding the efforts that employees make in behalf of the organization.

Perhaps, to some, this seems like common sense - "Doesn't everyone know that?" Unfortunately, the answer is, "No!" And what is more disheartening is that some who do know it do not practice it. Educators, in general, report that their superiors do not bother to comment in a positive way on the good results that are achieved. Few people report receiving even a thank you note for a job well done. George Stuckey, who directed the Department of Education's Teacher Quality Program, was surprised to find that some educators struggled to identify possible incentives and rewards. In such instances, it was their prevailing mindset that blocked their ability to think. It was not within their paradigm of education to believe that positive outcomes would be rewarded.

It does not take much to make people feel special. Many administrators have recognized the importance of incentives, and the resulting awards banquets for kids, teachers, parents, support staff, etc. have a definite positive effect on morale. Recognition is a powerful reward. People need to feel valued and appreciated - all people!

### **Role model and demonstrate**

Repeatedly, it has been cited in the professional literature that the principal is the key in determining the climate within the school. This is a heavy responsibility. All leaders face the same dilemma of being asked to place themselves in a position which is vulnerable to criticism. Therefore, one of the process skills to be developed is that of knowing how and when to act on and demonstrate one's values and beliefs.

One of the twelve elements of effective leadership skills for principals developed by the NASSP Assessment Center includes expressing one's educational values. Leaders know what they believe; they further understand that it is important for those they lead to know and understand these values. It isn't that anyone else must agree, it is just that, as leaders attempt to influence outcomes, or create a climate for positive change, they must clearly articulate what they stand for.

For example, a principal who smokes would need to be sensitive to the fact that this behavior sends a mixed message to the school community about the priorities for health education. The principal who says that the school is for all kids, but does not champion the needs of "underdogs," may be perceived as a hypocrite. Knowing who you are and what you believe, and acting consistently on those beliefs helps establish credibility. It makes one less vulnerable in the long run to the whims and agenda of every group that comes down the road!

### **Role playing**

This is among the most powerful of the process skills. It involves letting two or more people pretend that they are someone else. Often, role playing is developed around a problem or a conflict. When training educators, these roles are usually those of teachers, coaches, non-certified staff, parents, students, central office people, etc.

Some people feel that role playing is superficial. Perhaps it is, but the potential results in increased learning and skills is certainly worth the risk of being superficial. Obviously, the situation is make-believe, but when one assumes the role of another, perhaps the antagonist, or plays oneself, when the words are spoken and feelings expressed, it can be very real. Stomachs churn and palms sweat...learning occurs!

### **Running list**

This is the process of keeping key ideas, concepts, or points of emphasis in front of the audience at all times. For example, it is not uncommon at IPLA training sessions for the facilitators to post a large sheet of newsprint in a conspicuous place so that they can write down the process skills as they are being practiced.

This running list provides an ongoing reminder to everyone that these items are important outcomes.

### **Self-direction**

This is the process of being responsible for one's behavior through the effective use of other process skills, such as time management, conflict resolution, stress management, decision-making, goal-setting, etc.. Self-directed individuals have a commitment to continuous personal and professional growth.

### **Self-fulfilling prophecy**

This is the process sometimes known as the Pygmalion effect. It is the concept that one tends to become whatever others, or self, set as the exception. A positive image is more likely to develop if one receives positive feedback from others. Conversely, negative feedback from others tends to result in negative behavior and a negative self-image for the one getting the feedback. Winners expect to win; losers expect to lose.

TESA, Teacher Expectation of Student Achievement, is a classroom strategy based upon the phenomenon of the self-fulfilling prophecy. In those classes where it is clearly understood by students that the teacher expects all

students to learn, achievement tends to be higher.

### **Self-interview**

This is the process of conducting an internal dialogue, talking to oneself. We all talk to ourselves; it is a very human trait. Most of our self-talk is negative. We constantly doubt ourselves.

The self-interview is one attempt in a systematic way to ensure that, in key situations where one needs to succeed, a positive self-dialogue will help by preparing a mindset focused upon the task at hand.

### **Seven-minute decision making**

This requires the exercise of sound judgment if it is to be effective. Skilled decision makers always take time to acquire as much information as possible from valid, credible sources before making a final ruling.

One simple method that serves well in a variety of situations is one known as the 7-minute decision making model. When time is a great factor, when leaders desire input from others, and when shared ownership is important, this process works.

Step 1 involves having participants spend one minute individually brainstorming all the possible ideas or outcomes they can generate.

Step 2 requires individuals to join together to form groups of no more than five people. One person serves as a recorder for the group. This person begins the round by reading his/her list to the others. In turn, moving around the group, each person adds a new idea or possibility to the master list. The groups are given three minutes to complete this step.

Step 3 is the final round of three minutes, in which the group is challenged to reach consensus on the best idea or possibility suggested by them.

From this point, leaders must decide if there is enough overlap in the data coming from the groups that a clear-cut preference has emerged. If not, an additional round may be required to eliminate all but the top one or two choices, as prioritized by the entire group.

### **Simulation**

This is the process of practicing a "real" event under controlled conditions. It can be built around a highly structured set of rules and procedures which have been carefully designed for such practice; or, it can be done by creating some loosely conceived parameters that serve a one-time situation.

For example, the NASSP Assessment Centers use a prescribed set of highly structured, standardized activities to simulate the daily work of a principal. It is effective as a process for judging one's potential for becoming an administrator.

On the other hand, a facilitator may ask some volunteers to role play a situation as a means of practicing some specific skill(s).

In either case, it is the practice that is important, whether formal or spontaneous in design. Just as in role playing, new insights and learning occur, in no small part, because of the emotional involvement of the learner.

## **Situational leadership**

This is the ability to exercise a variety of leadership skills, each appropriate to the time and situation. For example, the Ohio State Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) is a self-assessment tool which helps people understand why using the same leadership style in all situations is foolish, if not counterproductive.

For example, when one is confronted with a situation where quick, decisive action is called for (such as a fire alarm), it is not the time to use leadership skills of collaborative nature. Another example reflects times when the situation may call for actions which are contrary to usual goals. Productivity is usually a top priority, but when a tragedy strikes, it is the time for building relationships and maintaining morale. It is not the time to ask employees to step up the production.

And finally, wise leaders recognize situations where the most effective leadership style is to fade into the background and let capable, competent people do the job without any direct involvement by the leader, other than MBWA!

## **Storyboarding**

This is another process skills which emerged from Walt Disney. It involves the free wheeling of ideas with the discipline of prioritizing. It takes advantage of the power of synergy by encouraging people to piggyback one possibility after another. It is a style of displayed thinking which enables several people to be active participants at the same time. It encourages flexibility, remaining open to the unexpected, and discourages judgment and closure too soon. As a planning process, this is most effective in helping to move an idea from its embryonic stages to the sequence of events required to achieve full implementation.

## **Stress management**

This is the process of reducing, or minimizing, the amount of undue stress in one's life. Stress, tension, and pressure are an integral part of life. Stress is a motivator without which there would be less reason to grow, change, or develop. The key is to recognize those aspects of stress which are unhealthy, and counterproductive to achievement.

Effective stress management requires the combined use of several other process skills. Those who know themselves intimately, who understand what motivates others, who can analyze situations accurately, who are willing to ask for help, who are good organizers, who maintain a sense of humor, (and who pray a lot!) are less likely to be victims of undue stress.

Remember the Alcoholics Anonymous credo: "God, grant me the courage to change

what I can, the grace to accept that which I cannot, and the wisdom to know the difference."

## **Teaching for transfer**

This is the process of helping others to see the relationship between new learning, new skills, and how these can be applied, not only to the immediate situation, but to some future situation that may appear. In some circles, this is referred to as making the "hook," making the connection between things that are directly related, or only vaguely connected. In the process of making the "hook," the teacher makes the connection more obvious and has taught for transfer.

## **Time management**



This is the process of organizing one's priorities through systematic planning, delegation of responsibilities, and efficient use of resources so that spiritual, personal, and professional activities are achieved in harmony.

Implicit is the assumption that those who are effective time managers are those who have clearly defined goals, and who have mastered the other process skills required to achieve this end.

### **To see, hear, do, teach**

This is a process of teaching that integrates all modalities to the end that learning is retained to the fullest extent possible.

The research indicates that if seeing is the primary modality for teaching new information, only 14 percent will be retained at the end of 30 days. The percent will be increased to 22 percent, if the sense of hearing is combined with seeing.

If teaching incorporates the "doing," the practice, or application, of the new learning, retention will jump to 30 percent. By adding coaching and feedback, with practice over time, 42 percent learning will be retained over a 30-day period.

The highest rate of retention, 91 percent, occurs when all of these result in having to teach the new information to others.

### **Treating behavior and attitude separately**

This is the ability to make a clear distinction between the person and the behavior. It is a process often used when confronting others with some unacceptable aspect of their performance.

It is an important skill in achieving a win/win outcome through confrontation. Separating behavior from the person is a giant step toward achieving success in that process.

Too often, comments are made that are clearly personal putdowns, and the result will be a passive/aggressive response. To minimize defensiveness, unacceptable behavior should be stated in clear behavioral terms, not attacks on the person.

For example, being late to school may be a habitual and undesirable behavior for a teacher. Thus, when confronting the individual, the focus is on the negative impact of the behavior on the system and others. Making comments like, "You are irresponsible," or, "You are undependable," are generalizations and come across as personal attacks.

### **Turn ons and turn offs**

This is the process of helping others to identify what one group likes and dislikes, as compared to another. This is a useful process in helping groups which must work compatibly to achieve a better understanding of what rewards or irritates the other.

In this activity, the trainer has one group assume the identity of the other and project their knowledge of the assumed group's role. For example, in a workshop involving students, teachers, and parents, the trainer might ask a group of students to take a large sheet of newsprint and write a list of things they think are "turn ons" (rewards or satisfying outcomes) for parents. Perhaps the parents would be asked to do the same for teachers, and teachers do the same for parents.

The lists are then posted, and time is provided for each group to read and react to what the other group has

written. Part of the read and react step includes the instruction to add to, or question, anything that appears on the respective lists.

In debriefing the activity, the door is open to promote a dialogue among the groups, based upon accurate and/or faulty perceptions.

### **Vision building**

Success, perhaps, begins as a state of mind. Successful people are often quoted as saying that their success can be attributed to a clear vision of what it is they want to become or accomplish. The power of this point has not been lost on the corporate leaders of the nation. Many companies have developed vision statements to guide their decisions about marketing and productivity.

Vision statements can be written about almost anything one can imagine. Such statements can be written for companies or by an individual, but in either case, there are a few ingredients that all good vision statements would share in common.

Vision statements should be written as if they have already happened. By writing in the present tense, the mindset is established that this is a reality, not something that might happen in the distant future. Visions must be a reflection of the best we can imagine, but attainable. They are idealistic, but only to the point that we can influence its outcome.

Vision statements ought to include some feelings, some emotion, some sensory perceptions that bring it to life. A good vision statement will describe how things would be, would feel, etc., if we had achieved the very best.

### **Visualization**

This is the process of creating a "movie of the mind," mental imagery, mental rehearsal, or silent movie. It is the process of using imagination to create a mental picture of the goal to be achieved. Using the "mind's eye" to visualize the best one can imagine!

### **Working journal**

The process of keeping a working journal can pay off in big dividends. How many times are good ideas lost because we did not take time to jot them down? Consider the last good idea you failed to act on. Some can recall the idea and the reason for failing to follow up. Others cannot even remember their last best idea.

A working journal is not a daily diary. It is not an intimate record of personal feelings. It is a record of thoughts, partial plans, or reactions to something new that suggests an agenda for action some time in the future. A working journal is a process which can help promote more action on more ideas because they get recorded for future reference.

For example, a principal may be watching a graduation ceremony at another school and see something which triggers a thought for change or improvement in the way things are done back home. It will likely be several months before it is time to plan graduation for the next class. By writing the idea into a working journal with enough rationale and detail, the idea can be catalogued for future use. Getting a working journal started requires commitment and discipline, but the potential for saving ideas that otherwise will be forever lost may well be worth the effort.